

Report on	The Loan of Council Equipment to External Groups
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Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To agree a process for the loan of equipment to non-profit groups or organisations within the Mid Ulster Council District.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>During the year, but particularly at peak periods such as Summer/Halloween and Christmas, Mid Ulster Council receives many requests for the loan of equipment such as gazebos and crowd barriers, which is of great assistance to local groups and organisations when they are organising and delivering events. The Council have always tried accommodated these groups where possible and are keen to support local communities and event organisers with the loan of equipment.</p> <p>Typically, but not exclusively, below is some of the equipment that we receive requests for:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 x 3m x 3m gazebos in Dungannon, • 10 x 4m x 4m gazebos in Cookstown • 25 3m x 3m gazebos in Magherafelt. • 124 Crowd Control Barriers in Cookstown <p>Whilst this paper refers primarily to the equipment listed above, we would also recommend that other departments follow and use the same process when they receive a loan request for equipment.</p> <p>In addition, to the gazebo's and barriers which the events teams manages, Council also have staging, a Portal PA system, Picnic tables and benches and Cage Football, which have been requested in the past and are the responsibility of other departments.</p> <p>Last year there has been a significant increase for the loan of equipment from local groups and organisations, and the need for consistency and protection of the Council is required.</p>

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Due to the high volume of requests, and in the absence of any formal system to accommodate these requests, this has resulted in many operational issues occurring. But by formalising the process and informing the groups in advance regularly, this should make the process much more efficient and provide greater protection for the Council.</p> <p>With the exception of the Magherafelt Depot, the Council haven't got full time staff manning either the Cookstown or Dungannon sites where the equipment is stored and subsequently have to make provision to ensure the equipment can be signed in and out; this results in staff from Property Services being taken away for other jobs, which puts additional pressures on different staff teams.</p> <p>To date, a number of gazebos has been damaged, which have not been reported to Council when the items were returned and therefore Council have incurred the cost to repair. In addition to accidental damage, increased wear and tear on equipment, due to the frequency of use, will also increase the need for the equipment to serviced and repaired. The cost for repairing the Gazebos in Magherafelt 2016/17 was £2,500.</p> <p>We have also found that requests for equipment has been inconsistent across the Council, and this has caused a number of issues in the past. We have also discovered that equipment has been lent out to groups prior to Council events, at which they were required, which also put added pressures on the Council.</p> <p>In addition, before corporate events, there have been occasions whereby the gazebos needed to be cleaned, i.e. power hosed, before use as a result of them being returned in a poor state; again this puts unnecessary pressures on the internal resources.</p> <p>The officers consider that there is there a need for formal process as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Book all equipment by email request, cross reference with Internal Events. Internal events must have priority - Department taking the booking must notify Property Services if applicable (For gazebo and barriers – as they will have to meet the groups to sign equipment out/in) - If the equipment is available, sign a loan agreement form indemnifying the Council in respect of damage or loss howsoever caused in relation to the use of the equipment and committing the borrower to return it by a specified date and time before arriving on site to collect. - All equipment must be collected and returned by the group. The Council will not deliver equipment. - Collection time is agreed to avoid public waiting - Return time must be agreed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The staff must inspect the equipment on issue and return, and sign back in with any damages confirmed with the borrower and recorded. If damaged the group must pay for the damages - Two formal training sessions should be arranged annually which will seek to train the groups on how to set-up and dismantle the equipment safely and to have appropriate regard to weather conditions and the need for appropriate clothing and safety precautions. <p>All equipment should be annually serviced, with maintenance records kept</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Other Considerations</p> <p>Other points to consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefit the equipment gives to the groups. • Some of the smaller events, probably could not afford to hire the equipment • The Events Cluster noted this help
<p>4.1</p>	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Financial: Costs of repair and servicing of equipment is likely to increase.</p> <p>Human: Staff process agreement forms and to sign out and in at specific sites.</p>
<p>4.2</p>	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None – providing all groups and sections of the community are treated equally in terms of access to Council equipment</p>
<p>4.3</p>	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>To be effective, indemnifications must be in written form and entered into by a competent person with authority to sign on behalf of the group. There is potential for the terms of an indemnity to be unenforceable if deemed unreasonable.</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>(1) The Council continues to take a risk based approach to the loaning out of specific equipment to non-profit making groups and/or organisations within the Mid Ulster District Council area.</p> <p>(2) No equipment shall be lent to any group or organisation unless and until Council is satisfied that the group or organisation is aware of all relevant</p>

	<p>health and safety risks associated with the operation of the equipment and have been adequately trained in the carriage, installation, operation and dismantling of the equipment</p> <p>(3) Equipment will only be lent to a group or an organisations on receipt of the approved 'Equipment Loan Agreement' being signed by a competent person with authority to sign on behalf of the group and returned to the Council in advance of the event accompanied, where appropriate, with the appropriate insurance that will indemnify Council from all risks associated with the borrowing of the Equipment.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix 1 - Draft Equipment Loan Agreement Form